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Excerpt: The Knights of Columbus – Bishop England Assembly recognized Caitlin Golson as their Veterans Administration Volunteer of the Year. Golson, a four-year participant in the Columbia VA Health Care System’s Summer Student Volunteer Program, is a dedicated volunteer who has given nearly 1,000 hours in volunteer-time to several local charities and organizations.

Columbia VA Health Care Summer Student Volunteer Awarded as Knights of Columbus Volunteer of the Year

The Columbia Knights of Columbus – Bishop England Assembly held their annual First Responders Dinner, Dec. 15, where they honored seven individuals who have served their country or their community.

“We hold this event once a year to show recognition to those in our community who are patriots and selflessly serve the community,” said Mark Sullivan, a Knights of Columbus member and retired Army colonel.

The ceremony opened with remarks from Gerald White, a local WWII, and Battle of the Bulge veteran, who captivated the audience with his old war stories.

Along with members of the Columbia and Richland County Police and Fire Departments, Caitlin Golson, a senior at Spring Hill High School (SHHS) and participate in the Columbia VA Health Care System’s (CVAHCS) Summer Student Volunteer Program, was among the seven honored at the dinner. The Knights of Columbus recognized Golson as their Veteran Administration Volunteer of the Year.

“I was a bit nervous about [being honored] tonight, but once they called me up it was a great feeling,” said Golson. “It made me feel very special.”

Over the past four years, Golson has dedicated nearly 1,000 volunteer hours to several local organizations including: Sharing God’s Love, the CVAHCS, and Leeza’s Connection. Along with her volunteer efforts Golson is also a member of SHHS’s Student Council, BETA Club, the National Honor Society, and secretary for SHHS’s Sign Language Club.

“Being able to give back and knowing that I am making a difference in peoples’ lives in our community, veterans especially, makes me feel so good,” said Golson.

Sutton said Golson was chosen for the award after the Knights of Columbus heard about her volunteer efforts at the CVAHCS. “This girl is so selfless. With the amount of work, she does and her dedication to helping others it is hard to believe that she is just in high school,” said Sutton.

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Gibson has been accepted to Winthrop University and plans on obtaining a Bachelor of Science in psychology with a minor in business with aspirations of utilizing her education to become a community change agent.

Learn more about how VA is improving Veterans experience at va.gov/ve.

Photo Cutlines:

DSC_8894 – Caitlin Golson is recognized as the Knights of Columbus – Bishop England Assembly Veterans Administration Volunteer of the Year at their annual First Responders Dinner.

DSC_8901 – Caitlin Golson gives a speech after being recognized as the Knights of Columbus – Bishop England Assembly Veterans Administration Volunteer of the Year at their annual First Responders Dinner.

DSC_8909 – Caitlin Golson poses for a photo after being recognized as the Knights of Columbus – Bishop England Assembly Veterans Administration Volunteer of the Year at their annual First Responders Dinner.

Keywords: Columbia VA; Dorn VA; Veterans; Community Partnerships; Volunteering; Knights of Columbus